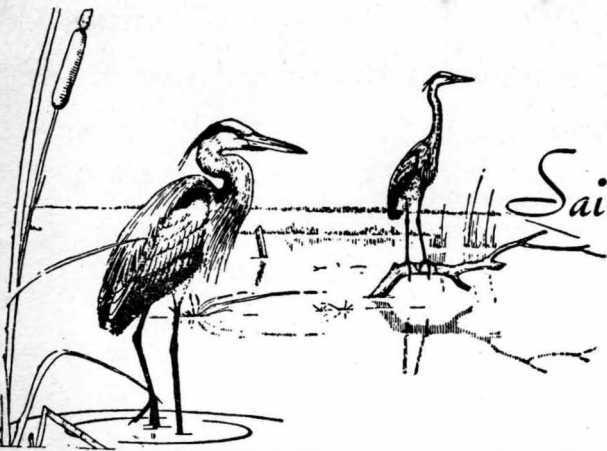




Saint Louis Audubon

Bulletin

Vol. 24 No. 3

January, 1956

ANIMALS AT MIDNIGHT

With Howard Cleaves

On Thursday, January 26, at 8:00 p.m., the Third Baptist Church will once again be the scene of an Audubon Screen Tour. A continuance of the fine quality of this year's programs, which have already brought us Alexander Sprunt and Roger Tory Peterson is guaranteed as we will have

A new and different film! The first full length color motion picture of wildlife at night by Howard Cleaves, whose black and white film program called "Midnight Movies" brought him nationwide fame.

Wild animals work on two shifts, the day shift and the night shift. By means of a portable gasoline generator the night shift is turned into day by Howard Cleaves through powerful flood lights penetrating 150 feet or more. Under the spell of a strong light beam, deer become transfixed, their eyes glowing like live coals in the dark. With clever devices for mounting lights on a tripod with his camera, on the bow of a boat, and even on his own shoulders, Mr. Cleaves has prowled through forest and bayou to record the night life of deer, raccoon and muskrat; osprey, chimney swift and great blue heron; turtle, frog and cicada.

He has descended in a water-tight tank to film diving ducks in action. He has cruised 250 miles over the Florida Everglades in a blimp to photograph wildlife below. He has crouched night after night for more than a week in a steel barrel on the edge of a forest clearing to record flashlight pictures of wild bears.

If a stone, tossed aloft by a boy on Staten Island in 1906, had not glanced off a telephone wire, Howard Cleaves might never have done any of these things. He was the boy and the wire supported a baby kingbird. The sudden jar sent the bird tumbling to the ground. Young Cleaves carried the stunned creature home and a neighbor, who owned a camera, let him snap its picture. That early photograph started him on his adventurous career.

Observations

J. Earl Comfort

In the St. Louis area October was a very productive month from the bird lister's standpoint, with both the weather and rare species co-operating during most week ends.

The State Audubon Society of Missouri held its annual meeting at the Lake of the Ozarks State Park, Oct. 8th and 9th with a good attendance from the St. Louis area. There were 70 species of birds counted on the various well attended walks. The excellent indoor programs were interesting, inspirational and educational.

The St. Louis Audubon Society field trip at Creve Coeur Lake and the Marais Temps Clair marshes in St. Charles County on October 15th, resulted in 76 species.

On the following day 65 kinds of birds were seen at the Weldon Springs August A. Busch Wildlife Management area joint Webster Groves Nature Study Society and St. Louis Audubon Society census.

The Audubon Society field trip at Rockwoods Reservation in St. Louis County on October 29th, led by Polly Moore was rather unproductive as far as birds were concerned because of a cold, strong wind, which is not conducive to good bird lists.

The Swan Lake Area in Calhoun Co., Ill., has produced some excellent birding this Fall, particularly in October when such rarities as Franklin's gulls, Hutchin's Canada geese, pigeon hawk, Harlan's hawk, a western grebe and a golden-crowned sparrow were identified. The sparrow, goose, grebe, gulls and Harlan's hawk were found there October 30th by Dick Anderson. The previous Sunday gave us a Hutchins' goose, pigeon hawk, about 35 Franklin's gulls and 3 horned grebes when Earl Hath, Jack McDonald, Stoner Haven, Gary Giessow and Earl Comfort visited the Federal Wildfowl Refuge. On Nov. 12th Sally Springer and Alberta Bolinger found several white-fronted geese there.

In addition to the rarities the sanctuary held thousands of ducks, cormorants and coots as well as hundreds of Canada, blue and snow geese. There were 16 species of ducks. If you like your wildfowl in enormous numbers Swan Lake is the place to bird.

On November 1 Gene Wilhelm had a close look at a red-shafted flicker at Spanish Lake in St. Louis County. Most of us would welcome a sight of this rare bird at any range.

On November 6 Earl Comfort identified a prairie falcon in St. Charles County at close range by its light clay-coloring of the upper parts, its slight mustache and dark axillars.

Rarest Fall warblers were a black-throated blue found for our Busch census group, September 11th, by Sally Springer. In September Jack Van Benthuysen had the only pine warbler reported for the year.

On November 11th while aboard a cruiser on the Mississippi as guest of the Wesselings, Kurt, Jr., spied a golden eagle above the Illinois bluffs. Close scrutiny revealed all the qualifying identification marks of an immature golden. Later a bald eagle in pursuit of the rarer species gave us a good chance to contrast the soaring flight of the two species.

There was a noted heavy migration of blackbirds on November 12th. Bruce Dowling reported mixed flocks of grackles, red-wings and rusties numbering in the thousands were seen and heard as they passed overhead during the entire day at the Busch Wildlife Area.

The Busch census of November 13th gave us a dark phase Harlan's hawk with its conspicuous white tail.

On November 19th Dick Anderson identified a rare goshawk in St. Charles County. Later in the day he had an old squaw duck.

A spotted towhee has taken up winter residence in Warson Woods in St. Louis County. This is the only spotted towhee reported this year. Such rare finds there, and they have been numerous, will soon be a thing of the past as surveyors' stakes and flags set up in this heavily wooded tract indicate we will soon lose our best suburban birding spot to "progress".

Six whistling swans were seen over some St. Charles County marshes November 23rd and 24th. Proof of their presence rests in the Dowling Canada geese enclosure at the Busch Refuge in the form of a crippled swan found by a conservation agent in the county and turned over to Bruce Dowling, Area biologist, who is endeavoring to nurse the big bird back to recovery. Bruce also received several Canada geese netted in northern Missouri. These wing clipped birds will be used in a breeding experiment at the Area. A pair of pinioned Canadas reared a family there this year.

Mr. and Mrs. John Longmire, of Webster Groves, who usually attract a great many birds to their yard because of feeders and a profusion of trees and shrubs, have again induced a red-breasted nuthatch to winter in their vicinity. In the past they have had 3 of these friendly nuthatches at one time.

Bruce Dowling continues to furnish us with interesting bird note reports. Some of his latest were a whistling swan at his Busch Wildlife Area on November 20th, which was photographed. A white-winged scoter was killed near the Alton Dam and the only redpoll found at this refuge to date was one he captured among tree sparrows he was banding, December 7th.

Gene Wilhelm came up with the only area report of evening grosbeaks for the year when he found 3 in St. Charles County, December 17th.

The year 1955, our fourth straight dry one, was otherwise fairly normal weatherwise.

A short resume of birding activity within a radius of 50 miles of St. Louis shows 276 species were reported. The consensus of opinions of listers reveals the top ten were probably

cattle egret, golden-crowned sparrow, laughing gull, cinnamon teal, Swainson's hawk, prairie falcon, western grebe, whistling swan, glossy Ibis and Smith's longspur. Some other rather rare birds listed were eared grebe, old squaw and white-winged scoter ducks, Harlan's hawk, red-shafted flicker, yellow-palm warbler, evening grosbeak, redpoll and white-winged and red crossbills.

The finch family led with 39, followed by the warblers with 36. There were 23 kinds each of ducks and shorebirds and 20 of the hawk family. The shorebird total was kept low by lack of suitable mud flats.

Listers with 200 or more species were led by Dick Anderson with 253, followed by Earl Comfort with 248. Some others with more than 200 were Alberta Bolinger, Earl Hath, Stoner Haven, Dave and Lance Jones, Jack McDonald, Sally Springer, Jack Van Benthuyzen, Kurt Wesseling and Gene Wilhelm. Jack McDonald was a new 200 area lister.

During the recent Christmas bird census dates of December 24th to January 2nd, inclusive, 95 species were found in the St. Louis area. Some of the rarest were white-fronted goose, old squaw duck, rough-leg hawk, long-eared owl, short-eared owl and spotted towhee. Among the unusuals for this season were cormorant, great blue heron, coot, killdeer, snipe, brown thrasher, hermit thrush and myrtle warbler.

MAINE PASSES HAWK AND OWL BILL

One more State has joined the slowly but surely increasing number that offer real protection to hawks and owls. On August 20 of this past year Maine's new "Hawk Law" became effective. It was passed by the state legislature and given final approval on May 11, 1955. The bill was sponsored by the Bangor Bird Conservation Club and was supported by the Augusta Nature Club, the Maine Audubon Society, and the Federation of Garden Clubs of Maine.

There is a provision in the amendment that permits the "owner or occupant of land to kill hawks or owls when in the act of destroying poultry." The National Audubon Society pointed out that it is only occasional individual hawks and owls that develop a taste for poultry and that even these infrequent depredations can be prevented by keeping the poultry penned.

Passage of the hawk and owl protective law in Maine is in keeping with a nation-wide trend toward better protection of birds of prey, the National Audubon Society stated. The Society has just made a survey of state bird protection laws which reveals that only six states now fail to protect any hawks and owls. States that have recently extended total or additional protection to these birds include Indiana, Idaho, New Hampshire, and Michigan.

Exception of the horned owl from protection in Maine was described by the Society as "unfortunate." It quoted the well-

known biologist and sportsman, Dr. Paul L. Errington of Iowa State College, in defense of the horned owl:

"I would say that, even from a man-centered point of view, the horned owl belongs in our natural out-of-doors wherever its activities are not too much in conflict with human interests, and that persecuting it at random merely because killing it may be legal or customary, is a mistake.

"The hooting of the horned owl in a winter evening is reassurance to me that real wildness still exists, and I am thankful to live where I can hear it. Far from being a dismal or menacing sound, it has for me a freedom and beauty to make the air sing."

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

516 Bacon Avenue, Webster Groves 19, Mo.

DUES cover also National Audubon Society Membership

Student	\$ 2	Active	\$ 25
Regular	5	Supporting	50
Husband-Wife, Regular	8	Contributing	100
Sustaining	10	Life	200
Husband-Wife, Sustaining	18		

Membership includes subscription to Audubon Magazine and free Admission to Screen Tours. Student Membership includes subscription to Canadian Illustrated.

In addition to membership dues, many members make special gifts to enable the St. Louis Society to carry on other activities, and this is most warmly appreciated.

In order to carry out our program, contact your friends, tell them of the conservation work done by the Audubon Society at both National and Local levels. Many of them would like to be associated with us.

SCREEN TOUR PROGRAM

Monday, March 19 — **THE LONG FLIGHT BACK** — Robert P. Allen

Monday, April 30 — **WANDERLAND** — William H. Wagoner, Jr.

Mark these dates on your calendar. Tell your friends of the wonderful opportunity to see and hear these wonderful fine programs. Remember this year, Admission Will be Free.

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Answers to Quiz on Page 8

1. American Bittern.
2. Cyngus, The Swan.
3. Brown Thrasher
4. Sprague's Pipit.
5. White-breasted Nuthatch.
6. Ducks and Geese.
7. The Robin
8. The Cardinal.
9. Summer Tanager (Adult Male).
10. Kildeer.

PERSONAL

Dr. Mildred Trotter, member of the Board of the St. Louis Audubon Society, received the Globe-Democrat "Women of Achievement" Award, Science Division. Ten women who have done much toward the building of a better community were selected for this distinguished award. The announcement of the women and the categories for which they were chosen was made on New Year's Day.

Mr. Jay Morrow, Assistant Director of the Missouri Conservation Commission, passed away at his home in Jefferson City on January 4, 1956.

An exhibit of Richard Grossenheider's original mammal paintings used in the Peterson's Guide Series will be shown at a date to be announced later.

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AUDUBON CAMPS

When the cold wind howls and winter seems to have come in for a permanent stay, one of our favorite pastimes (your's too I'll bet), is to get the vacation folders, maps, books and other assorted material and make plans for our too short three weeks stint.

Becoming increasingly popular with St. Louis Audubon Society members are the Audubon Camps. We hope you will consider these this year when you are planning your vacation. Enrollments should be sent to National Audubon Society, 1130 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., and to avoid disappointment send yours in early. For your convenience schedule is listed below.

AUDUBON CAMP OF MAINE: located in the Todd Wildlife Sanctuary on Hog Island in Muscongus Bay, 60 miles north of Portland, Maine.

Session I: June 15-28	
Session II: June 29-July 12	\$95 fee for each session,
Session III: July 13-26	which covers board, lodg-
Session IV: Aug. 3-16	ing and tuition.
Session V: Aug. 17-30	

AUDUBON CAMP OF WISCONSIN: located at beautiful Hunt Hill in Wisconsin's cool northern lake country, 100 miles from Minneapolis-St. Paul, 300 miles from Milwaukee and 400 miles from Chicago.

Session I: June 17-30	
Session II: July 1-14	\$95 fee for each session,
Session III: July 15-28	which covers board, lodg-
Session IV: Aug. 5-18	ing and tuition.
Session V: Aug. 19-Sept. 1	

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON BULLETIN

PUBLISHED BY

The St. Louis Audubon Society

Earl H. Hath.....President

James F. Comfort.....Editor

Mrs. J. Marshall Magner.....Executive Secretary

Enter Next Quiz.

The Bulletin will pay \$1 each for the TEN BEST Quiz Questions submitted for the next issue. Any question regarding birds, the out-of-doors, or conservation will be considered pertinent. You may submit up to 4 questions, but not more than 3 winning questions will be allotted to any one entrant.

Entries for next issue must be postmarked on or before February 29 and winning questions and answers will be published in next issue. Winners will be eligible to participate in larger prize later on.

Address entries to: **James F. Comfort, Editor**
27 N. Iola Drive St. Louis 19, Mo.

What Do You Know?

(Our Own Quiz Program)

Score: 10 Excellent. 7-9 Good. 5-7 Fair. Below 5, study Peterson.

1. What bird makes a pile-driving sound in the swamps?
2. What constellation is "migrating south"?
3. What songbird habitually sings each phrase of its song twice?
4. What bird rarely found in Missouri is sometimes called "The Missouri Skylark"?
5. What small bird has earned the name "up-side-down bird"?
6. To what family does the term "eclipse plumage" apply?
7. What well known bird owns the scientific name "TURDUS MIGRATORIUS"?
8. Name Missouri's only common permanent resident member of the grosbeak family.
9. Only one bird found in Missouri is red all over. What is it?
10. What plover nests locally?

(Answers on Page 6)

Winners of the \$1 per question for this month's quiz questions are: Buryl Commins, P.O. Box 7471, Lakewood 15, Colorado; Nancy Self, Webster Groves; Mildred Reese, St. Louis; and Charles Hail, Creve Coeur. Prize money was donated by Alex Hope.

St. Louis Audubon Society
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